



# PRESS RELEASE

## Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation *Chief Richard Weber*

Date: January 23, 2017

Contact: \*CI-HQ-COMMUNICATIONSEDCATION@ci.irs.gov  
IRS – Criminal Investigation

CI Release #: CI-2017-01-23-B

### **Pennsylvania Man Pleads Guilty in False Tax Refund Scheme**

A Pennsylvania man pleaded guilty today to conspiring to defraud the United States and to aiding and abetting the filing of false claims for tax refunds, announced Acting Deputy Assistant Attorney General Stuart M. Goldberg of the Justice Department's Tax Division and Acting U.S. Attorney Louis D. Lappen for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

According to the indictment and information presented to the court, Shamback Francois, 27, engaged in a scheme to fraudulently obtain income tax refunds through the filing of false returns using stolen personal identifying information. At least one of Francois's co-conspirators electronically filed the false tax returns, which directed that the fraudulently claimed refunds be deposited into a bank account in the name of Shamback Tax Service. Francois did not have a tax preparation service, but had opened up the account in order to facilitate the crime. Francois withdrew funds from this account to pay his co-conspirators. As part of the plea, Francois admitted to causing a loss of \$425,841.14.

Francois is scheduled to be sentenced on April 18 before U.S. District Court Judge John R. Padova. Francois faces a statutory maximum sentence of 10 years in prison for the conspiracy count and a statutory maximum sentence of five years in prison for the false claims count. He also faces a period of supervised release, restitution and monetary penalties.

Acting Deputy Assistant Attorney General Goldberg and Acting U.S. Attorney Lappen commended special agents of Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation and the FBI, who conducted the investigation, and Assistant U.S. Attorney David Ignall and Trial Attorney Eric B. Powers of the Tax Division, who are prosecuting the case.

###